

Weekly Column for December 22, 2005

Just as I did last year, I want to take this space this week to wish each and every one of you Happy Holidays over the next week and half. No matter what religion we celebrate this is a very special time of the year, and I hope everyone remains safe, and has a great time with friends and family.

Back in 1823, Clement Clarke Moore published the first version of 'Twas A Night Before Christmas in the Troy Sentinel for his two daughters. Also known as a Visit From Saint Nick, the story has become a cherished holiday tale for kids of all ages. So rather than bore you with the ramblings of a mayor, I thought I just leave the poem here, and again wish everyone a safe and happy holiday

Harry J Tutunjian  
Mayor of Troy

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse,  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.  
The children were nestled all snug in their bed,  
While visions of sugarplums danced in their heads,  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap...  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,  
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
"Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet! on Cupid! On, Donder and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"  
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.  
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,

And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.  
His eyes -- how they twinkled -- his dimples how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.  
He had a broad face and a little round belly  
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his teams gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,  
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"